

REMARKS

By this Amendment, the title, Abstract of the Disclosure, Claims 26, 29 and 30 have been amended, and new dependent Claim 44 has been added, to place this application in immediate condition for allowance.

In the outstanding Office Action, the Examiner has alleged that the title of the invention is not descriptive and has requested a new title. As such, a new title has been presented.

The Examiner has pointed out that the Abstract of the Disclosure as originally presented exceeds 150 words. As such, a new Abstract has been presented which falls within the 150 word requirement.

In the outstanding Office Action, the Examiner has rejected Claims 26-28 and 31-33 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,246,231 to Ashe in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,767,669 to Hansen et al. Without going into detail as to the merits of this ground of rejection, it is pointed out that, under patent law, an applicant's own patent may not be used as a prior art reference against him or her in a subsequent patent application so long as the subsequent patent application shares the same inventive entity and was filed within one year of the issue date of the earlier patent. In this case, U.S. Patent No. 6,246,231 was issued on June 12, 2001. The present application was filed on March 18, 2002, well less than one year thereafter. As

such, it is impermissible under patent law to reject claims in this patent application in reliance upon applicant's prior U.S. Patent No. 6,246,231. Since each of the grounds of rejection rely upon applicant's prior U.S. Patent No. 6,246,231, the grounds of rejection are without basis under patent law and should be withdrawn.

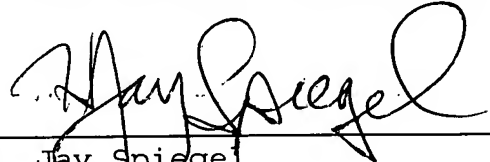
Although Claims 26-28 and 31-33 are not subject to rejection based upon Applicant's prior patent, for the reasons set forth above, Claims 26, 29 and 30 have been amended to more particularly point out and distinctly claim that which Applicant regards as the invention. The Examiner's indication of the allowability of Claims 29-30 is noted with appreciation. Based upon the amendments and remarks set forth above, it is not believed necessary to rewrite these claims in independent form. The allowance of Claims 1-25 and 34-43 is noted with appreciation.

New Claim 44 has been added which is dependent from independent Claim 26. Dependent Claim 44 finds clear support in the Specification and is allowable for the same reasons set forth above concerning the allowability of independent Claim 26, from which it depends.

As such, it is believed that the application is now in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and allowance of this application are respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "H. Jay Spiegel", is written over a horizontal line.

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